Rhetorical Democracy: An Examination of the Presidential Inaugural Addresses

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Table of Contents

Abstract 1
Introduction: Growing Up in a Democracy 2
Basic Communication Model 3
Why Presidents 4
Why Words Matter 5
Why Inaugural Addresses 7
Methodology 10
Rhetorical Analysis 10
Inaugural Analysis 11
Macro Analysis 11
Micro Analysis 12
The Inaugural Addresses 15
George Washington 15
John Adams 16
Jefferson 16
Madison 17
John Quincy Adams (JQA) 17
Jackson 18
William Henry Harrison 18
Lincoln 19
Wilson 20
Harding 21
Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) 21
Truman 21
Eisenhower 22
Kennedy 22
Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) 22
Nixon 23
Carter 23
Reagan 24
George H.W. Bush 24
Clinton 25
George W. Bush 25
Obama 26
Rhetorical Trends 26
Wartime Rhetoric 26
Defined Conflicts 27
War of 1812 27
Civil War 27
World War I and World War II 28
Vietnam War 28
Ideological Conflicts 29
Cold War 29

Global War on Terrorism 31
What are we? The Democracy-Republic Debate 32
Founding Documents 32
Declaration of Independence 32
Articles of Confederation 33
United States Constitution of 1787 33
The Federalist Papers and Early Thoughts on the Form of Our Government 33
Democracy Goes Public (as in a speech) 34
The Birth of Essential Democracy 36
Democracy: The Idea and Ideology 38
Classical vs. Modern Liberalism 38
The Persistence of the Idea 40
The Next Debate: The Proper Role of Government 41
The Last of the Republic 44
A Republic, if you can keep it…or watch it change 45
Moving Beyond Rhetoric: Obama's Calls for the Future 46
Appendices 48
Appendix A: Key Term Usage 48
References 51

ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that there is nothing in the Constitution requiring it, nor prescribed by any other federal law, the President's delivery of an inaugural address has become a *de facto* requirement of the official Presidential inauguration. The Presidential inaugural address is an anticipated feature of all inaugural ceremonies because it is where the newly elected president outlines, among other things, his perspective on the manner, conduct and overall form of the American government. Within this outline, the rhetoric utilized by the President during inaugural addresses shapes the way in which the American people understand our system of government on both a theoretical and functional level. This research examines the utilization of the term "democracy" in presidential inaugural speeches as a rhetorical device and the impacts of this terminology upon conceptions of American governance. This rhetorical analysis provides a lens to view the changing dynamics of American political thought.

INTRODUCTION: GROWING UP IN A DEMOCRACY

Growing up in America, the word "democracy" is imbedded into one's subconscious. From an early age, children learn about the Founding Fathers and the Framers of the Constitution. Throughout an American student's formative years, he or she is constantly bombarded with various statements and famous sayings which are taught as being somehow inextricably linked to this word "democracy." However, while a student inculcated with this sense that democracy is an aggregation of principles and the product and culmination of an historical progress, her or she might have to reflect deeply about what the word democracy means. One might just as easily explain what the term means by its Greek etymology, defined as "rule of the people" (Barbour 15). In a way these two methods of explaining what democracy means are seemingly contradictory. On the one hand, there is the rudimentary definition that simply breaks down what the term literally means; while on the other, there is an explanation that incorporates historical, cultural, and normative interpretations in order to help facilitate an understanding of certain ideas and principles that are associated with the overarching concept that is democracy. Perhaps neither explanation is sufficient for a proper understanding of what democracy is. Yet, in many ways, both have become necessary for establishing a complete foundation in order to answer the question of: "what is a democracy?"

Many political philosophers grapple with this fundamental issue. There is much debate over whether democracy is a "form of state just as tyranny…or…form of thought, and it is impossible…to be subordinate to the state" (Vermeren 61). However, the very debate over whether democracy is just another type of state, or rather a part of a more abstract system of ideas, provides evidence that, at least for some, democracy is more than just a type of state. Indeed, one German social democratic theoretician notes, nearly all individuals that actually use the word "democracy...understand by it more than a mere form of government" (Bernstein 323). In this sense, democracy has become an idea—a normative concept—that is associated with various principles such as, free, fair and frequent elections, rule of law, freedom of expression, access to alternative sources of information, associational autonomy, and inclusive citizenship (Dahl 39-40). The tendency to associate these normative concepts with the word democracy presents an interesting situation. One has to ponder to what extent these

normative characteristics derive their origins from the real life forms of government that the word describes, or if they are more theoretically based.

The flexibility afforded to the term democracy lends itself to be used as a dynamic, yet powerful, rhetorical device. Accordingly, this research examines how the term "democracy" is employed as a rhetorical device in public communication and how it is utilized in the inaugural addresses of Presidents of the United States. In doing so, several fundamental questions will be addressed:

- Why and for what purposes do Presidents use inaugural addresses?
- How are inaugural addresses used to define what a democracy is and what it means to be a democratic nation?
- Does the usage of the term democracy move beyond a simple attempt to describe a system of government? If so, in what ways?

Basic Communication Model

This analysis will employ a basic communication model for functional purposes. It will categorize communication into four basic components: sender, message, channel, and receiver (Narula 31). The sender will always be the President-elect who is delivering the inaugural address. In some instances, presidents have taken their oath prior to delivering their inaugural address. However, any discrepancy arising from this difference does not deter from the substantive basis of this analysis. The message will always be the inaugural address that the President delivers. Although, at times, excerpts from other speeches delivered by the president may be introduced to provide more appropriate context for analyzing the inaugural. The channel through which the inaugural address is delivered will change according to the particular address. While all presidents have read aloud their address, the venue where the address is given has changed. Furthermore, the introduction of new technologies like the radio, television, and the internet have added new channels through which the message has been delivered. The receiver of the inaugural addresses also varies depending on the particular address. Whereas earlier presidents only delivered their addresses to Congress, the

inaugural addresses of modern presidents are broadcast not only to the American people, but to the international community as well.

Why Presidents

The role the modern president plays in American political life is much different than the role played by the first holders of the office. Many scholars argue that the Framers of the Constitution set forth a much more limited role for the chief executive. The President was to be an administrator working primarily behind the scenes whose powers were to be narrowly constrained by the Constitution. This is evidenced in the *Federalist Paper No. 67*, in which Hamilton elaborates in detail the vast differences between a monarch and the powers of a constitutionally limited President of the United States (Federalist Paper No. 67, 1788). Now however, Americans "no longer consider it inappropriate for presidents to attempt to move the public by programmatic speeches over the heads of Congress" (Tulis 145). Indeed, a popular leader whose administration actively sets the course of a vast conglomerate of bureaucratic agencies, like that of the president today, was not what the Framer's had conceived. This change in the dynamic of the position has lead many scholars to broadly segment presidential studies into two eras, the traditional era, from the founding of the office in 1789 to the early 1930s, and the modern era, from the 1930s to present (Barbour 212-219).

One aspect of this larger phenomenon is the increased tendency of presidents to engage directly with the public. The president's engagement with the public is given more weight when we examine what the president symbolizes to citizens. Studies suggest that a majority of Americans feel as though the president "stands for our country" (Kernell). Some even employ the metaphor that the president has come to be viewed as the "common father of the citizens, burdened with the care of his children" (Hinckley 55). Richard Ellis contends that the notion that the president should speak for "the people" has become understood. The president, he argues, has become the "people's representative;" in some ways, even more so than Congress (Ellis 1). There is the belief that while Congress may speak with many discordant voices, the president, in his capacity as the chief executive, is "the Voice of the People" (Rossiter 32-34). These scholars assert that the president, who as chief executive is already the head of government, is also viewed as the head of state.

Fred Greenstein breaks down the question of "what the president means to Americans" systematically, separating his functions into four categories. He contends that the president serves as 1.) a symbol of the nation; 2.) an outlet for positive feelings regarding one's country; 3.) a cognitive aid to symbolize and substitute for the complexity of the entire governmental apparatus; and 4.) a means for individuals to vicariously participate in current events (Greenstein 130-131, found in Hinckley 9-10). Greenstein's model, while detailed, focuses largely on the symbolic function of the president. Barbara Hinckley also utilizes Greenstein's model in her comprehensive analysis of *The Symbolic Presidency*. Guiding Hinckley's analysis however, is her notion that "expectations shape actions; action leads to further expectation" (9). With this in mind, Hinckley argues that the normative expectations that people have regarding how the president should behave shape how the individual in the office acts. Further, she contends that this process is reciprocated, as the actions of presidents shape the expectations the people have regarding how a president should act.

Why Words Matter

Numerous scholars have advanced the idea that the actions, or in the case of this analysis, the words of the president shape our normative expectations of the role of the president has been advanced by many scholars. At the core of this analysis is the concept, succinctly described by Murray Edelman, that "political language is political reality" (104). The fact that we devote time and energy to the study of ideologies, the existence and proliferation of accompanying literature on ideologies, and the centrality of ideologies in discussions of both historical and contemporary political climates provides evidence of, and bolsters the argument that "ideas matter." In corresponding fashion, language, as a means of the conveyance of one's ideas, also matters.

The literary theorist Kenneth Burke, in his work *Grammar of Motives,* argued that the precision of one's language reflects that individual's underlying philosophy. The work of Richard Weaver elaborated upon this notion, contending that analysis of language was a critical component in understanding a particular political ideology. Building off these precepts, the communications theorist Bernard Brock argued that the "language used to describe our world" provides a "window into deeper structures of thought and politics"

(Brock et. al vii). Brock suggested that the term "democracy" is what the rhetoric theorist Michael McGee calls an ideograph, a word or phrase, "employed in real discourse, having meaning not through precise material reference but because of the ideological work that they do" (37). Accordingly, this analysis agrees with the culmination of thought articulated in Brock's work, and argues that the language employed by all Presidents reflect their ideology and understanding of political reality. Understanding presidential rhetoric is an important aspect of American political science because, as Roderick Hart contends in *The Sound of Leadership*, the rhetoric of the president affects the way in which people understand the Executive branch (202). The modern communications scholar David Zarefsky has put forth a definition of presidential rhetoric as a means to advantageously define political reality and shape public policy (2004). I agree with these characterizations of presidential rhetoric and argue that such rhetoric has an even more profound impact, in that it influences the manner in which people understand our entire system of government on both a theoretical and functional basis.

Martin Medhurst's compilation *Beyond the Rhetorical* Presidency examines the creation of the interdisciplinary study of the presidency and the practice of rhetoric. His analysis traces the history of two constructs; 1.) the rhetorical presidency, which examines the characteristics of the actual office of the president; and 2.) presidential rhetoric, which explores the thematic and stylistic choices of presidential communication . Medhurst suggests that the seminal essay, "The Rise of the Rhetorical Presidency" written by James Ceaser, Glen Thurow, Jeffrey Tulis, and Joseph Bessette was the first synthesis of rhetorical and political analysis of the presidency. These scholars furthered study into this genre with their own individual works. In his book, *The Rhetorical Presidency*, Tulis examined how presidents have utilized rhetoric as a means of governance, which has become a powerful tool in light of presidents' rise to a position as a popular leader. Tulis's examination focuses on the differences between popular rhetoric, the manner in which rhetoric is commonly employed, and constitutional rhetoric, falls in the purview of constitutional limits. On the other hand, Thurow and Wallin's research, grounded in President Washington's inaugural discourse, focuses on how the character of the president influences the manner in which the people obtain their views on constitutional principles. The scholars Bruce Gronbeck and Thomas Benson have examined

presidential rhetoric from a more "functionalist" perspective, observing the manner in which presidents have used rhetoric for their advantage in a political context (Medhurst xxi). Much of their analysis focuses on presidential rhetoric's adaptation to advances in communication, like television and the internet.

Other scholars have also proffered viewpoints and research which address the significance of presidential rhetoric, e.g. Ellis's *Speaking to the People: the Rhetorical Presidency in Historical Perspective* (1998) and Leroy Dorsey's *The Presidency and Rhetorical Leadership* (2002). However, the most comprehensive research into the discourse of presidential rhetoric is the latest work by Campbell and Jamieson. Building off of their earlier works (1990), these communications scholars produced the analysis *Presidents Creating the Presidency: Deeds Done in Words* (2008) which examines the rhetoric of practically every form of presidential public discourse, from inaugural addresses, State of the Unions, vetoes, pardons, etc.

Why Inaugural Addresses

Presidential inaugurations are one of the most formal, and perhaps most important, state ceremonies in America. The peaceful transition of political power that defines presidential inaugurations is often considered a celebration of the "democratic process" (Hinckley 21). The President's inaugural address is an anticipated feature of all inaugural ceremonies. Despite the fact that there is nothing in the Constitution, nor proscribed by any other federal law, the President's delivery of an inaugural address has become a *de facto* requirement of the official Presidential inauguration. Historically, with the rare exceptions of John Tyler, Millard Fillmore, Andrew Johnson, and Chester Arthur who, due to rare circumstances[1], never gave inaugural addresses, every President has chosen to follow Washington's lead in delivering an inaugural address. Gerald Gamm and Renee Smith categorize inaugural addresses as "nondiscretionary statements," and posit that they a statement that the President is required to make (95). Campbell and Jamieson suggest that certain inaugural addresses have "articulated the notion that the president becomes 'the president' through delivering the inaugural address" (34). These scholars further contend that the inaugural address is viewed as "an extension of the oath of office" (35). Inaugural addresses also provide incoming

[1] In each of these cases, the individual had assumed the presidency after the death of the current President and was later not elected for another term.

Presidents with their "first official opportunity to wield the power of language" in the capacity as President of the United States (Sigelman 81).

While a more detailed analysis of the significance of presidential inaugural addresses will be outlined later in this research, it is important to note that inaugural addresses are a unique form of political discourse. As the historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. has written, inaugural addresses are at a time when, "the nation listens for a moment as one people to the words of the man they have chosen for the highest office in the land" (vi). I chose the inaugural addresses of the presidents as my data source because they present a type of discourse that practically every president has engaged in. Moreover, as far as formal speeches are concerned, inaugural addresses theoretically afford the president more leeway in regards to what they can address because there are not requirements that the President *must* satisfy in the speech. Accordingly, the trends that develop in the inaugural discourse are revealing of both the normative expectations that have come to define the speeches and also of the precedents that individual presidents establish with their addresses.

One of the earliest studies that specifically focused on inaugural addresses was conducted by John McDiarmid (1937). McDiarmid saw inaugural addresses as an opportunity to study the "official vocabulary" of the United States (79). This study examines the inaugural addresses from 1789 to 1937, systematically categorizing words and phrases into four groups: 1.) Symbols of national identity; 2.) Symbols of historical reference; and 3.) Symbols of reference to fundamental concepts; and 4.) Symbols of fact or expectation. Of note, is the fact that McDiarmid categorizes references to "our form of government, our institutions, our system, etc." as symbols of national identity. Also, the analysis categorizes "self-government, government by the people, etc." as symbols of reference to fundamental concepts. McDiarmid contends that the inaugural addresses consistently convey the message that America has the best system of government.

A similar analysis conducted by Kinnier et. al (2004) examined the values extolled in the inaugural addresses. Kinnier et. al. utilized an ethnographic content analysis, examining words and phrases that were associated with fourteen different values, from "liberty" to "lower taxes." The study then determined the percentage of times each value was mentioned

in the inaugurals as a whole. They then held constant the variables of political party (Democrat/Republican) and time period (19th/20th) century and examined which groups emphasized the different values.

Miller and Stiles (1986) analyzed the increasing connectivity that American Presidents formulate with the public via their oratory. Their analysis demonstrates the existence of a President-Public relationship that is built off of recognizable verbal symbols in a candidate's public speeches, beginning with a candidate's campaign and culminating in their inaugural address. Their conclusions highlight the importance of Presidential rhetoric in building a relationship with the people and obtaining public trust and support.

Rather than focusing on particular values or principles, Herbert Stein analyzed the changing dynamic s of the tone of inaugural addresses over time. While Stein suggests there may be certain exceptions to these broad groupings, he breaks down the inaugurals into three distinct phases: 1.) Washington through Buchanan, the modest, classic public servant; 2.) Lincoln through Taft, the prosaic government executive; and 3.) Wilson to present, assertive, theatrical, leader-preacher. Stein contends that the third phase of inaugural addresses was witnessed a transition from describing government policy to attempting to inspire the public's behavior via rhetoric (29).

Campbell and Jamieson's first comprehensive study (1990) categorized inaugural addresses as their own rhetorical genre. They contend that while prior analyzes have mentioned inaugural addresses, such was only done in passing and the "symbolic function" was largely misunderstood. Their argument is that inaugural addresses are "an essential element in a ritual of transition in which the covenant between the citizenry and their leaders is renewed" (29). Their analysis categorizes inaugural addresses as a type of discourse that Aristotle called epideictic, which they suggest is:

> a form of rhetoric that praises or blames on ceremonial occasions, invites the audience to evaluate the speaker's performance, recalls the past and speculates about the future while focusing on the present, employs a noble, dignified style, and amplifies or rehearses admitted facts (29).

These scholars identify first identify features of inaugural addresses that affirm its categorization as an epideictic, then outline four key features that differentiate inaugural addresses from other versions of this rhetorical form. The first feature is that inaugural addresses "unify the audience" by recreating a "mutual covenant" that reconstitutes the "audience as 'the people' and constitute[s] the citizenry as a people in some new way" (34). They contend that a key element of inaugural addresses is the necessity of the people serving a "witnessing role" to the ceremonial rite of passage. The second feature is that inaugural addresses "rehearse national values" and "venerate the past" (36-37). The third feature is that the addresses "set forth the political principles that will guide the new administration" (39). Lastly, the addresses must "enact the presidential role" by demonstrating that the new president "appreciates the requirements and limitations of executive functions (42).

Lee Sigelman followed up on Campbell and Jamieson's original work with a more critical analysis of two of the fundamental features that they identified. Sigelman demonstrates that overtime there has been an increase in the amount of unification and veneration terms displayed in the inaugural addresses. Of note is that Sigelman's list of "traditional American value" terms, which is derived from Hart's (1984) and McDevitt's (1986) analyses, the term "democracy" is considered a traditional term, yet the word "republic" is not included (88).

METHODOLOGY

Rhetorical Analysis

My analysis of the inaugurals is guided by a two-tiered perspective on the emergence and function of rhetoric. The first perspective builds off of the work of Lloyd Bitzer, who argues "it is the situation which calls the discourse into existence" (2). Accordingly, this view maintains that rhetoric is constructed in response to and within the context of a particular "rhetorical situation" (6). In this sense, the exigent circumstance is the "engine that drives the rhetorical action" and it is the situation as a whole that supplies the rhetoric with its meaning (Medhurst xv and Holtzman 5). The second perspective acknowledges the more active role that rhetoric plays in the "construction of situations" (5). This view suggests that the message crafted by the rhetorical speaker not only responds to the present circumstances, but is used to construct a new reality. This research synthesizes these perspectives in its analysis of the

presidential inaugurals. While certain expectations constrain the addresses to what some scholars suggest is a relatively predictable form, the rhetoric employed in each address also can set new precedents and create future expectations upon which later speeches are assessed (Hinckley 22).

Inaugural Analysis

Macro Analysis

This research focuses almost exclusively on the fifty-six inaugural addresses that have been given by Presidents of the United States from George Washington in 1789 to Barack Obama in 2009. Excluded from this data source are the remarks made by ascendant presidents who assumed office after the death or resignation of the president that were outside of the formal inaugural ceremony. The full text of each inaugural address that is used for this research is derived from the Yale Law School's Avalon Project. In the few instances where the Avalon Project's hyperlink was not sourced properly, the text of the inaugural address was obtained from Bartleby.com.

As mentioned, the overarching purpose of this research is to determine the ways in which the term "democracy" is utilized as a rhetorical device in presidential inaugural speeches. My initial hypothesis was that the term "democracy" would be used frequently in the majority of the inaugural addresses and that its usage would increase in later speeches. I believed that the term would be used as a rhetorical device by being associated with various normative concepts. Using basic word search features, I scanned through each inaugural address for the word "democracy." My initial findings demonstrated that the term was not employed anywhere near the amount I initially predicted. For my next scan I therefore searched for both the usage of the term "democracy" and "democrat/ic." While the incorporation of this second term increased the number of findings, I still felt as though there was something missing.

Searching for inspiration, I analyzed Washington's first inaugural address in its entirety. Upon careful examination I was struck by his reference to the "destiny of the republican model of government" (Washington, 1789). Accordingly, for my third search of the addresses, I scanned for the terms "republic" and "republican." I paid close attention not to

include references to political parties (i.e. Democratic-Republicans, Democrats, or Republicans) in the summation of the terms. The number of references to this second set of terms outnumbered the first by a margin of 99 to 77. Analyzing the initial findings from this macro word analysis, I calculated the usage of these terms by members of each political party. Furthermore, noticing that Franklin Roosevelt's first inaugural address was the first instance in which the term "democracy/democratic," but not "republic/republican" was employed, I calculated the use of the terms in relation to "Pre-FDR" and "Post FDR." I once again then calculated the use of the terms according to political parties.

Micro Analysis

The macro word count analysis provided a broad overview of certain trends in language over the span of all of the inaugurals. However, the core of this research focuses upon the manner in which the terms (democracy/republic) are utilized as rhetorical devices. As such, I needed to make determinations in regards to which specific inaugural addresses I would examine further in order to elucidate the various ways in which such terminology is employed. While my research will draw points from outside of the addresses I dedicated to further micro analysis, the following are the presidents that I chose to examine more closely based on my initial findings from my macro level analysis.

- Washington: As the first President, Washington's first inaugural address shaped the expectations for all future addresses. Accordingly, an analysis of the precedents that his address set is critical to understanding the entire collection of addresses.
- John Adams: As the second President, Adams's address highlights how Washington's predecessors felt obligated to deliver a formal inaugural address.
- Jefferson and Madison: Recognized by many as the leading minds behind two of America's most revered documents, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the inaugural addresses of Jefferson and Madison highlight how these men view the government that was established by those documents.

- John Quincy Adams: John Quincy Adams is the first President to use the term "democracy." As such, an analysis of his address is essential to this research.
- Andrew Jackson: Jackson's address is notable for its lack of reference to either a "democracy" or "republic." Furthermore, following the precedent set by John Quincy Adams's usage of "democracy," Jackson's decision to exclude either term requires further analysis.
- William Henry Harrison: An examination of inaugural addresses must include a discussion of Harrison's infamously long speech delivered in terribly inclement weather. Also, Harrison employs the key terms more than any other president.
- Lincoln: Lincoln's inaugural addresses are revered as containing some of the most eloquently written prose in all of American presidential rhetoric. However, what is of note is that neither of Lincoln's addresses contain the key terms.
- Wilson: Wilson's addresses, like that of Jackson's first, are notable for their exclusion of the either key term. This is of particular interest given Wilson's characterization by many scholars as giving rise to the "rhetorical presidency."
- Harding: Harding utilizes the key term "republic" the second most amount of times.
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt: FDR's addresses are groundbreaking by many standards. For the purposes of this research, FDR's first address sets the precedent for utilizing the term "democracy" without using the term "republic." Furthermore, taken as a whole, FDR's addresses demonstrate a shift in the terminology employed by all of the presidents.
- Truman: Truman's address employs the term "democracy" more than any other president. Furthermore, his speech demonstrates conforming to the rhetorical expectation set by FDR.
- Eisenhower/Nixon: These two sets of addresses are notable for their absence of either of the key terms. Also, the fact that both were Republicans is partially

revealing of a reluctance by the party to utilize the increasingly proliferated term "democracy."

- Kennedy: Kennedy's address, like that of Washington's and Lincoln's, requires further examination for its prose alone. However, what is noteworthy for this research is Kennedy's exceptional use of "reconstituting the people" without addressing the form of government.
- Johnson: LBJ is the next President to utilize the term "democracy" after Truman's heavy usage of it. Furthermore, Johnson's Great Society programs, similar in scope to FDR's over a point of comparison between how each President utilizes the key terms.
- Reagan: Reagan is the last President to utilize the key term "democracy." Furthermore, he is often held out as the symbol of modern conservatism. Also, his address contains the iconic phrase "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem"
- George H.W. Bush through Clinton: Demonstrate the pattern of President's utilizing the term "democracy" without referencing a "republic."
- Obama: Obama's inaugural address excludes the use of either key term. Furthermore, the speech's rhetoric suggests the dawning of a new ideological era in American political thought.

For each of these inaugural addresses, I will perform an analysis of the "rhetorical situation" in which the speech is given. Making particular note of the contemporary historical and political context in which the speech is delivered, as well as making note of any relevant personal factors that impact the rhetoric of the speech. The focus of the each micro analysis will be on how the key terms "democracy/democratic" and "republic/republican" are utilized in the speech. The analysis will explain how the terms are employed as rhetorical devices within the overarching story of the speech as each president places himself in the "rhetorical situation." Lastly, my conclusions will evaluate any key trends that emerge across the various addresses.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESSES

With each inaugural address, there is a different "rhetorical situation" that the President must interact. As such, the particular circumstances that governs the time in which a President delivers an inaugural address plays a critical role in shaping the rhetoric which is employed. The following is a description of the factors that influenced the inaugural addresses which I chose to analyze more thoroughly as part of my micro analysis.

George Washington

Washington's first inaugural address is essential to this study because of its groundbreaking precedent as the first official words spoken by a U.S. President and also because of the behavioral expectations that his address established. While there was no formal requirement to give an inaugural address, Washington felt obliged to do so. Ironically the only President to have been unanimously elected by his peers to take the office begins his address with a sincere explanation of the humility he feels to be bestowed with such an honor, explaining the reservations that he has that he is qualified to perform the duties of the chief executive. However, with a blessing from the "Almighty Being" he sees that there is no better moment for the "experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people" to "more auspiciously commence." Indeed, although maintaining fervent reverence to the God figure that Washington addresses multiple times in grandiose Masonic language, Washington's genuine, unwavering faith in the destiny of the American people is evidenced. Washington keenly notes some of the responsibilities that are bestowed upon the office of the President with explicit references to the Constitution. He then provides a rather brief summary of his interpretation of the duties and responsibilities afforded to the newly created position.

Washington's second inaugural address is of particular note for its laconic simplicity. After generically addressing the audience with "fellow citizens," Washington only used a mere 133 words to express himself on the commensuration of his second term. He very simply explains that he will to his best to honorably execute the function of Chief Magistrate over the coming term. However, what is of note is that his address incorporates the idea of establishing a "mutual covenant" with the people. Before being sworn in, Washington acknowledges that he will take the Presidential oath in the presence of "all who are now witnesses of the present

solemn ceremony." This ceremonial mutual covenant idea works its way into many of the inaugural addresses.

John Adams

Adams's address demonstrates both mimicry and a divergence from the precedent established by Washington. On the one hand, Adams's address shows that Washington's predecessors must have felt to some extent obliged to deliver a formal address upon their inauguration. However, one could argue that Washington's first inaugural address was delivered because of its intersection with such a monumental moment in the country's history. Washington's second address is less of a speech and more of a simple acknowledgement of the role he is about to assume once again. Adams's address breaks from both of Washington's addresses by injecting large amounts of personal sentiments into the speech. Adams goes as far as to extraneously explain his own personal approval of the Constitution before it was ratified. Additionally, Adams begins the phenomenon of associating qualities, which he spells out in a detailed list, with our government.

Jefferson

Emerging as the victor in the election of 1800 after the House of Representatives was forced to break the tie between Jefferson and Burr, Jefferson's first address spends a significant portion discussing the idea of majority rule and minority rights. Given the highly contested nature of the election, it is not surprising that Jefferson tries to mitigate the potential damage of ideological differences, stating that "we are all Republicans, we are all Federalists," but that these are simply "different names brethren of the same principle." This sentiment is a perfect example of the concept of "unifying the audience" Jefferson then mimics Adams in outlining what he deems the "essential principles of our Government."

In Jefferson's second inaugural address, he takes the time to explain what has happened in the country over the last four years and what specifically his administration accomplished. This could also be viewed as a divergence from the precedent set by Washington. Adams did not have the opportunity to deliver a second inaugural address, so his lengthy address in some ways is in line with the actions taken by Washington. However, by elaborating on the country's relationship with the Native Americans and justifying the Louisiana Purchase,

Jefferson's second address is a clear departure from the simple statements offered by Washington at his second inauguration.

Madison

Madison begins his first inaugural address with an explicit statement that he feels compelled to give an address because he is "unwilling to depart from examples of the most revered authority," which can be observed as an allusion to Washington and his predecessors. Following the pattern established by Adams and Jefferson, Madison elaborates on the resolve the country because of its commitment to certain principles that he spells out. Of note is that Madison is the first to refer to the country as a "rising Republic." His predecessors had all referred to the country as possessing a republican form, but had never gone so far as to affix the proper noun label of "Republic" unto the country.

Madison's second inaugural address demonstrates a trend that is evidenced in many other later addresses. At the time of his second address, the country was currently battling Great Britain in the War of 1812. Accordingly, in contrast to his first address which spends a significant amount of time enunciating his beliefs and principles about the country, Madison's second address is almost entirely dedicated to discussing the ongoing conflict with Britain.

John Quincy Adams (JQA)

The inauguration of John Quincy Adams (JQA) occurred at a watershed moment in the early history of America. JQA assumed the presidency in 1825, the following year is what is considered the "year of jubilee," or the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In that "year of jubilee" two of the last vanguards of the fledgling nation, JQA's father John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson passed away. JQA further acknowledges that practically an entire generation has passed away since the ratification of the Constitution. However, unlike the first man to assume the role of President, JQA had to take the helm of chief executive after one of the most narrowly decided elections in presidential history. JQA had lost the initial popular and electoral vote in the general election of 1824. However, after the election was sent to the House of Representatives to be decided, the frontrunner, General Andrew Jackson, was beat out by JQA. JQA willingly admitted this fact, acknowledging that he was "less possessed of your [the electorate's] confidence in advance than any of my [his]

predecessors." Similar to Jefferson, JQA attempts to unify the audience by asserting that the "dissension" that has risen is merely "founded upon differences of speculation in the theory of republican government" and that there exists "no difference of principle."

JQA's speech is also groundbreaking in that it is the first inaugural address to incorporate the term "democracy." Parsons argues that in fact, "no president before him had ever used the word 'democracy' in a public address".

Jackson

The election of 1828 is considered by many scholars to have spurned the era of mass party politics (Remini, 2008 and Weston 1974). Furthermore, the inaugural celebration of Jackson was observed as the "howl of raving democracy" (Parsons). For the first time, the presidential inauguration became a public event as Jackson delivered his address on the East Portico of the Capitol Building (this was the location of the majority of inaugural speeches from Jackson to Carter). Historians explain that after Jackson's election a mass of people paraded the streets with Jackson to the White House. It is even suggested that the swarm of supporters was so large and frenzied that the furnishings of the White House were actually damaged (Pessen, 1985). However, despite all of the fanfare surrounding Jackson's inauguration, his address maintains a rather generic and unassuming tone, outlining budget issues, plans for naval increase, and a decrease in the standing army. His second address is almost equally as plain with the exception of his utilitarian remarks addressing the need for citizens to make "partial sacrifices" "for the preservation of a greater good."

William Henry Harrison

The short-lived tenure of Harrison's Presidency is always infamously contrasted against his inaugural address' distinction for being the longest in history. However, a thorough examination of Harrison's lengthy address reflects many key concepts of this analysis. While it might be expected, it is still of note that Harrison employs the terms "republic" and "democracy" more than any other president in a single address. Yet, rather than indiscriminately tossing around such terms, Harrison carefully dissects their meanings, utilizing examples from ancient Athens and Rome. Similar to its use by JQA, Harrison categorizes a representative democracy as a republic, which is different than a system that is

"purely democratic." However, Harrison's address also highlights the concept of "democracy" being utilized as a type of descriptor for some type of institution or idea, rather than merely as a form of government.

Harrison's address is largely focused on reversing the trend of increasing presidential power, suggesting it to be antithetical to the "intentions of the framers." He cites the linking of the treasury to the executive as an example of this phenomenon. Bolstering his argument that such a practice is a "danger to our republican institutions," Harrison provides the analogy of Caesar silencing the Roman knight in charge of the public money with a gesture to his sword. He also warns that an "unusual professions of devotion to democracy" "seldom fails to result in a dangerous accession to the executive power." Yet, despite expressing the notion that we should hold some reservations regarding those who present themselves as the bastion of democracy, Harrison injects commentary about the dangers of introducing an exclusively metallic currency because of his assertion that it would increase the divide between the rich and the poor. This social-minded policy not only builds off of the quasi-utilitarian notions expressed in Jackson's address, but also mirrors many of the "democratic" pleas put forth by later presidents.

<u>Lincoln</u>

Both of Lincoln's inaugural addresses were delivered amidst the backdrop of either pending or ongoing conflict associated with the Civil War. His addresses therefore are the perfect examples of the effects that external factors have on shaping the discourse of the president's address. There is no high level theoretical discourse on what type of government the U.S. is. In Lincoln's eyes, there was no greater exigency than the preservation of the Union, which demanded his full attention. Two weeks prior to his first inaugural address, Jefferson Davis had been elected to the President of the Confederacy. With fears rising that his administration would encroach upon the rights of the Southern States, Lincoln responds by tailoring his address in a legal framework. He attempts to demonstrate that he will not take any action that is unconstitutional. He similarly tries to draw an analogy that observes the Union as a binding contract, suggesting that it would require all parties involved to rightfully rescind the obligations entailed in the contract's provisions.

Lincoln's second inaugural address, arguably one of the most moving works in American history, was delivering in the waning months of the Civil War. In contrast to the legalese that pervaded his first address, Lincoln's second address taps into an emotional vein that speaks to the country as a whole, both the north and the south. He ends his somber masterpiece with the acclaimed "with malice towards none" invocation.

Wilson

The initial macro level analysis of Wilson's addresses lack of either the key terms "republic" or "democracy" was initially surprising given that Tulis and other scholars have characterized Wilson as giving rise to the "rhetorical presidency." Especially considering that Wilson asked for Congress to declare war against Germany because, the world must be made safe for democracy" (Wilson "Safe for Democracy"). However, upon more thorough analysis, the assertive leadership style evidenced in his agenda setting addresses helps justify Tulis' characterization. Wilson's first inaugural address begins with an explanation of the significance of the Democratic Party's dominance of both houses of Congress and the Presidency. He then forthrightly contends that's that the government has "forgotten the people" in lieu of "private and selfish purposes." The rest of his address is dedicated to outlining the problems with the country and asserting the need to establish an agenda that will put government "at the service of humanity."

It is not surprising that Wilson's second address lacks mention of the key terms "republic" and "democracy" as Wilson was undoubtedly mindful of the pending threat of war with Germany becoming a reality. However, similar to his first address, Wilson wastes no time setting the new agenda, establishing that "this is not the time for retrospect," but rather it is a time to "speak our thoughts and purposes concerning the present and the immediate future." Wilson's second address also introduces the "citizens of the world" concept that is picked up by practically all of his successors. Rather than maintain the tenets of Monroe Doctrine noninterventionist policy, Wilson asserted the new precept that "our own fortunes as a nation" are linked to dynamics of the world order.

Harding

Harding's tenure as president is generally only given a passing nod in the overall context of American history, as his term was abruptly cut short upon his death after two years. However, his inaugural address is of particular note for the manner in which he excessively uses the term "republic." Harding's address seems to be a direct reflection of his "America First" campaign platform, which was formulated in part as reaction to Wilson's thrusting the country into the international sphere (Sinclair, 1965). He largely focuses on venerating "our Republic" and the necessity of adhering to the age old "wisdom of the inherited policy of noninvolvement in Old World affairs." Also, in sharp contrast to future presidents who employ the term democracy more normatively, three out of four of Harding's references to "democracy" are used to describe very clearly our form of government as a "representative democracy."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR)

The content of all four of FDR's inaugural addresses is perhaps overshadowed by his monolithic statement "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." However, taken as a whole, FDR's four inaugural addresses represent a paradigm shift in presidential inaugural rhetoric that is at the crux of this analysis. In his first address, FDR sets the precedent as the first President to utilize the term "democracy" without using the term "republic" in an inaugural address. Even more revealing is the tone that FDR sets as he calls for exceptional support of his leadership during the "critical days" of the country's economic troubles. His addresses effectively establish "democracy" as an ideological construct that is associated with, but can also be mutually exclusive of a form of government. This notion also coincides with the transition from classical to modern liberalism, a theme that will be explored in greater detail later on.

In contrast to his previous three addresses, FDR's fourth address is much more toned down. At this time, the country is now enveloped in World War II. The speech utilizes much less grandiose language and is short as is reflective of other wartime addresses.

Truman

Truman's address follows directly in the wake of FDR's new rhetorical paradigm. Truman employs the term "democracy" more than any other president, mostly through a series of

direct comparisons between the "false philosophy" of communism and democracy. Throughout his speech, Truman acknowledges that democracy is also a powerful and pervasive idea. His address maintains the implicit premise that there are tangible benefits associated with democracy, as he holds out democracy as a panacea for all things. This is a perfect example of the tendency to link democracy to other factors, like the economy.

Eisenhower

The macro analysis shows that both of Eisenhower's addresses are void of the key words of "republic" and "democracy." However, a careful reading of his addresses shows that many of the themes established by the FDR paradigm have now subtly blended themselves into future addresses. Although carrying a heavily religious sentiment throughout his addresses, Eisenhower focuses on the contemplation of what the future holds in this new era in history with the introduction of the great powers of science. His address demonstrates that many of the modern liberal sentiments bolstered by FDR's administration have now become accepted premises that come hand in hand with living in a civilized world and the new order of things. The notion that "we are linked to all free peoples" is an echo of the "citizens of the world" construct first put forth by Wilson and continued throughout.

Kennedy

Kennedy's speech reiterated many of the scientific-humanistic dualities that present themselves at the time of his speech that Eisenhower had also picked up on. Similarly, Kennedy maintained the "citizens of the world" idea and expressed the same calls for peace as did Eisenhower. What is most noticeable about Kennedy's speech is his exceptional job at reestablishing the "mutual covenant" idea with his iconic invocation for the people to "ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." This classic call to service was considered an integral part of his administration's agenda.

Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ)

The address of Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) evokes the first implicit reference to the paradigm established by FDR. After periods of relative prosperity following WWII, LBJ contends that "if we fail now, we shall have forgotten in abundance what we have learned in hardship: that democracy rests on faith." In this statement, LBJ subtlety refers to 1950s and beyond as the years of abundance, suggesting that the hardships were the Great Depression

and WWII, the time during which FDR shifted the mindset to a democracy. Furthermore, LBJ suggests that success in continuing his Great Society movement, a social movement mirroring FDR's New Deal in its comprehensive scope, depends on "what we believe." This assertion demonstrates these programs hinging upon a belief or ideological construct.

Nixon

Nixon's addresses demonstrate the effect of external factors heavily influencing the content of what is discussed. Throughout both of his addresses, Nixon fails to utilize either key word. At the time of both of his addresses, 1969 and 1973, the U.S. was heavily involved in the conflict in Vietnam. Accordingly, as Nixon acknowledges, the "title of peacemaker…now beckons America." However, Nixon's addresses are not entirely preoccupied with the ongoing struggle of the era as was indicative of FDR's fourth address and both of Lincoln's speeches. His addresses still manage to find room for a discussion of the proper role of government in American society. Nixon still observes the necessity of pursuing the humanistic goals that were such an integral part of FDR's administration. However, while the goals remain constant, his addresses argue that American society has begun a "new era of progress" that requires "turning away from old policies that have failed." His address is heavily focused on the question over the proper role of government, a theme that is grappled with by the next several Presidents in their addresses.

Carter

Carter delivered his address in the wake of the final end of the Vietnam War. His address is aimed at moving beyond that conflict, yet it also suggests the need of promoting, although more subtly the value of American principles. He contends that America must be successful, because by demonstrating the success of the "democratic system" we can show the people of the world that our system is worth copying. His address once again thrusts the American people into a discussion of the proper role of government. While Nixon's address opened up the door to critical examine the limitations of government, Carter's address responds with the assertion that "we know if we despise our own government we have no future." This statement is an attempt to shift the focus of the discussion in a manner that is less hostile towards government. Yet, Carter's address still acknowledges the necessity, and tremendous difficulty, of the government being both competent and compassionate. Addressing this

dichotomy in a way suggests the blending of the classical and modern liberal constructs that have characterized many of the prior inaugural addresses.

Reagan

Reagan's first address continues the discussion over the proper role of government. However, unlike many of his predecessors, Reagan's address attempts to end the discussion with the famous assertion that "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem." Throughout his first address, Reagan advocates for a much more limited role of government, a position that reasserts a more classical liberal stance than his contemporaries. He argues that the success of America thus far has rested on our ability to break down boundaries and other unnecessary encumbrances in or to maximize freedom and unless "the energy and individual genius of man." In referencing the past four years in his second address, Reagan suggests that the realignment to a more classical liberal posture was a return to the American ideals of the country's early beginnings.

Despite his calls for a return to early American ideals however, Reagan's second address puts forth the notion that the Capitol building is a symbol of "our democracy." While his address still refers to the country as a "Republic," when speaking of the symbolic nature of democracy, Reagan offers several stories that are associated with the normative and mythic elements of what it means to be democratic.

George H.W. Bush

George H.W. Bush utilizes the same imagery employed by Reagan by referring to the Capitol as a symbol of where democracy occurs. Bush's address breaks the trend of focusing on the role of government. Bush's language overwhelmingly demonstrates the notion that democracy is an ideological construct. By saying that the inauguration is "democracy's big day" and suggesting that being there is taking "part in democracy," Bush suggests that democracy can be viewed as a type of action or event. Furthermore, by inextricably linking democracy to the notion of freedom and claiming that "democracy belongs to us all," Bush suggests that democracy is some type of feature, characteristic, or commodity that can be shared.

Clinton

Clinton's addresses demonstrate the notion of democracy being both an ideological construct and also a form of government. Clinton refers to our nation's government as having a democratic structure. In his second address, Clinton states that now more people "live under democracy than dictatorship." By comparing, Clinton suggests that indeed democracy is a form of government. However, Clinton shows even after shifting the form of government to the label of democracy, the word democracy still remains in part an ideological construct. His first address calls for our need to "revitalize our democracy." Furthermore, he suggests that America's "greatest strength is the power of our ideas" and that these ideas are "still new in many lands" that are in the process of "building democracy." This statement suggests that it is possible to build the idea of democracy.

Clinton's second address also restarts the debate over the role of government. Although he takes a rather ambiguous stance in suggesting that "government is not the problem, and government is not the solution," his address nonetheless thrusts the debate into the public consciousness. However, his attempt to remove government from the discussion of problems and solutions is something that is taken up in a modified way later by Obama.

George W. Bush

George W. Bush utilizes the term democracy as an ideal in much the same fashion as his father. In his first address, Bush constantly couples democracy with the notion of freedom, suggesting that they are both ideas, and that they are somehow inextricably linked. In both addresses, he utilizes democracy like an adjective, as in the statement, "our democratic faith," suggesting that democracy is a type of characteristic that defines the type of faith our country maintains. Furthermore, in contending that "the most important tasks of a democracy are done by everyone," Bush implicitly suggests that there are certain expectations or tasks that are intrinsic to democracies.

Bush's second address was delivered in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. While it is to be expected that Bush's second address would confront such a pivotal moment in our nation's history, what is of note is the manner in which Bush incorporates the ideological construct of democracy in his address. Once again Bush utilizes democracy as an

adjective in his mention of the work of "democratic reformers." The most revealing part of his address is his explanation of what will be American foreign policy moving forward. Bush explains that America will do everything in its power to support "democratic movements," but that it will not impose "our own style of government on the unwilling." Accordingly, democracy is seen as an ideal characteristic that can be bolstered and supported separately from any specific type of government.

Obama

The inauguration of Barak Obama was in historic and precedent setting in many regards. His inaugural address was similarly as divergent from prior Presidents. His address sets the tone that now is the time to end "petty grievances" and put "aside childish things" that have long separated Americans. In doing so, it will enable his administration to begin the "work of remaking America." Modifying the position that Clinton took in regards to the proper role of government, Obama suggest that the "question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works." His focus is not on a discussion of the form of government we have and even less a discussion of the semantics regarding this issue; rather, his address attempts to usher in a future of pragmatism.

RHETORICAL TRENDS

After completing my micro analysis, certain trends were evidenced in the inaugural addresses. In particular, there was a noticeable change in the rhetoric of Presidents during times of conflict, which I will later discuss in "Wartime Rhetoric." Additionally, I noticed an underlying debate regarding how to characterize the American form of government and what the proper role of that government is.

WARTIME RHETORIC

Although inaugural addresses are a type of oratory genre unto themselves, shaped by their link to the larger inauguration process, they are also shaped by the context of the era. As Medhurst contends, the "most basic principle of rhetorical theory is that the speaker or writer must begin with a thorough understanding of the rhetorical situation" (1996). Accordingly, when each President delivers the inaugural address, they are keenly aware, or at least try to

be, of the circumstances that are affecting the political dynamic of the time. External factors influence the addresses of the Presidents in a variety of ways. Sometimes the pressures are so intense that they demand the President explicitly acknowledge their existence. Other times however, the influence of external factors has much more subtle impacts upon the inaugural addresses. An example of a type of event that has both intense and subtle impacts upon inaugural addresses is the preoccupation with war.

While the U.S. is constantly involved in various armed conflicts, there are actually only several incidences when the country has been consumed with all out war. In sum, there are five conflicts whose severity demanded the explicit attention of Presidents in the inaugural addresses. They are the War of 1812, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War. These more defined conflicts must be contrasted against the more broad conflicts of the Cold War and the more recent Global War on Terrorism.

Defined Conflicts

For categorization purposes, defined conflicts refer to military engagements in which the adversaries and the fighting take on a more traditional form. The belligerents are typically state level actors or groups of states engaged in formally declared warfare.

War of 1812

Madison's second inaugural address was delivered while the country was battling the British in the War of 1812. Despite the nation still in its relative infancy, Madison does not use his address as a means of conveying his ideas on what America is. This stands in sharp contrast to Madison's first address in which he elaborates in detail what he sees as the principles of America. The address he delivers during the war reads more like a rallying cry to a group of assembled soldiers than it does a policy explanation of a political bureaucrat. His single mention of republic, comes out of his infuriated contention that the British, in "contempt of the modes of honorable warfare" are trying to "dismember our confederated Republic." (Madison, 1813).

Civil War

Both of Lincoln's inaugural addresses were delivered with the Civil War in mind. His first address was forced to respond to the secession of seven states from the Union. While

Lincoln's first address is dedicated to trying to save the Union, war between the north and the south was highly likely. Lincoln tries to craft an intelligent and logical argument that demonstrates why secession of several states cannot dissolve the Union which he sees as perpetual. However, it is revealing that during the time when the American system of government was most called into question, Lincoln's focus is not on getting bogged down in semantics. Similarly, when Lincoln gives his second address in the waning days of the Civil War, his focus is once again is not on a discussion of theory. Rather he conveys his hopes for a quick end to the conflict at hand and sets the tone for a pragmatic approach to post-war reconstruction.

World War I and World War II

The addresses delivered during both World Wars exhibit similar trends. In both instances, the addresses were given by a President who had already served a term prior to the beginning of the conflict. In Wilson's first address, he discusses a variety of ills associated with how the government has been put into use. Furthermore, he takes the time to outline what he sees as the problems facing the country and how his administration plans on tackling such issues. However, during his second address, there is virtually no discussion of domestic problems, but rather he focuses on how America is now a major actor on the international stage. Similarly, FDR's first three inaugural addresses are largely dedicated to outlining his New Deal agenda and the changes his administration plan on making in domestic social policy. FDR only references our "democracy" twice in his last address. This is a significant decrease from the twenty-nine times he references democracy or republic in his previous three addresses (an average of 9.6 times per address). Furthermore, his last address, given during the last year of World War II takes time to discuss the nature of our government only to speak of its resolve during times of struggle like the one it is currently engaged.

Vietnam War

The Vietnam War presents a much less clear cut example than previous military engagements. The fact that Congress never declared official war against North Vietnam makes the conflict almost quasi-defined, rather than obvious wars of the past. This quasi-defined nature is evidenced in the rhetoric of the Presidents during the period of the conflict. While the

addresses delivered during the Vietnam War acknowledge the existence of the conflict, their remarks are more in passing, rather than totally consumed as were previous wartime addresses. Kennedy acknowledges America's "role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger," (Kennedy, 1961) as does Nixon in explaining the honor of America's "title of peacemaker" (Nixon, 1969). Yet, these Presidents never let the conflict take hold of their address. The war was certainly *an* issue, but by no means was it *the* issue.

Ideological Conflicts

In contrast to more defined conflicts, ideological conflicts do not have as clear boundaries. Rather than combating a particular country, hostility is focused on some larger and less tangible abstraction. The rhetoric expressed during these engagements exhibits increased discussion of theory pertaining to American style governance.

Cold War

The Cold War shaped the political world order for the greater part of the half century after World War II. However, although conflict often was carried out in a variety of proxy wars, the dominant actors, the U.S. and the Soviet Union, never directly combated each other. The Cold War was rather a conflict of ideologies between the East and the West. Truman was the first President to deliver an inaugural address during this time period. Accordingly, his address established the tone for what this new political dynamic meant for the U.S., and to a large extent the rest of the world.

Truman directly acknowledges the emergence of a bipolar world hegemony between "the United States and other like-minded nations" and a "regime with contrary aims and a totally different concept of life." (Truman, 1949). He continues his assessment of the new world order by arguing that the essential difference between these two camps is their commitments to separate philosophies. The East (Soviet camp), he contends, have been mislead by the "false philosophy" of communism. Truman then demonstrates how the "false philosophy" of communism is diametrically opposed to democracy in a series of direct comparisons between the two ideologies. He contends that:

> Communism is based on the belief that man is so weak and inadequate that he is unable to govern himself, and therefore requires the rule of strong masters.

> Democracy is based on the conviction that man has the moral and intellectual capacity, as well as the inalienable right, to govern himself with reason and justice.
>
> Communism subjects the individual to arrest without lawful cause, punishment without trial, and forced labor as the chattel of the state. It decrees what information he shall receive, what art he shall produce, what leaders he shall follow, and what thoughts he shall think.
>
> Democracy maintains that government is established for the benefit of the individual, and is charged with the responsibility of protecting the rights of the individual and his freedom in the exercise of his abilities.
>
> Communism maintains that social wrongs can be corrected only by violence.
>
> Democracy has proved that social justice can be achieved through peaceful change.
>
> Communism holds that the world is so deeply divided into opposing classes that war is inevitable.
>
> Democracy holds that free nations can settle differences justly and maintain lasting peace. (Truman, 1949)

By directly comparing democracy to communism (which Truman already described as a philosophy), Truman demonstrates that he feels democracy is also an ideological construct. Furthermore, his series of comparisons highlights the qualities that Truman feels are intrinsically linked to the idea of democracy. He further outlines these qualities later in his address by stating that peaceful international relations are maintained by "applying democratic principles" and that economies are improved by developing the "concepts of democratic fair-dealing" (Truman, 1949). Indeed, Truman asserts the "benefits of democracy" to be a panacea for many of the world's troubles. This is evidenced by his contention that "*democracy alone* can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies—hunger, misery, and despair" (Truman, 1949 *own emphasis added*). Notice that Truman asserts that the application of "democracy alone" is able to provide such miraculous benefits independent of any other mechanism. Furthermore, democracy is able to not only free people from tangible problems like hunger, but it is able provide a sort of utopia that is without "misery, and despair."

Lastly, in his assessment that many nations are "now advancing toward self-government under democratic principles," Truman suggests that although associated with a form of government, democracy is somehow delinked from being purely a system of government.

Global War on Terrorism

The Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) commenced after the infamous terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. After the attacks, the power granted to the executive branch to engage in military conflicts was dramatically expanded with the passage of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists (AUMF). The expansive powers helped usher in a new global paradigm. While the Cold War pitted the East versus the West, the GWOT similarly split the world into two camps. President Bush affirmed this mentality with his command that "Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists" (Bush "Address to Joint Session," 2001).

Bush's rhetoric in his second inaugural address carries out the new global dichotomy created by the GWOT. Although his second address does not utilize the term "terrorism/terrorist," he supplants the term "tyranny/tyrant" instead (Bush, 2005). His address then focuses on the differences between the parts of the world that live under tyranny and those that live under democracy. Bush holds democracy out as a sort of weapon to be employed in this grand battle, suggesting that "the concerted effort of free nations to promote democracy is a prelude to our enemies' defeat" (Bush, 2005). A large portion of his address is focused on reaching out to the "democratic reformers facing repression," who are viewed as compatriots in the GWOT.

Bush's policy rhetoric strikes a precarious balance regarding the manner in which the U.S. will combat the broadly defined enemies in the GWOT. Bush asserts that the "it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world" (Bush, 2005). However, he later contends that "American will not impose our own style of government on the unwilling." By stating that the U.S. will unrelentingly support "democratic movements," but not "impose our own style of government," Bush's rhetoric suggests that democracy is a type of idea that is distinct from a particular form of government.

The addresses of Truman and Bush demonstrate the impact that large open ended conflicts have on Presidential rhetoric. Whereas the rhetoric in the addresses of Presidents in more defined military engagements tend to be more focused on the specific engagement, the open ended nature of the Cold War and the GWOT lend themselves open to become a contest of ideologies. The rhetoric of Truman and Bush show that in the context of such political dynamics, in lieu of an opposing belligerent state, the battles are to be fought between the concept of democracy and whatever the President sees as the other threatening ideological construct.

WHAT ARE WE? THE DEMOCRACY-REPUBLIC DEBATE

One of the key components of this analysis is the terminology that Presidents use to describe our country. While there are many normative concepts like liberty, freedom, and justice that are associated with discussions of "American ideals," the use of the terms democracy and republic have much different implications. Over the years these terms may have been adapted to also convey normative concepts as in the discussion of "democratic" or "republican" ideals, however, they derive their origins from their use as descriptors for different forms of government. As such, the selections made by Presidents reflect in part their conception of our country's form of government because as Campbell and Jamieson contend, this type of "public communication is the medium through which the national fabric is formed" (Campbell and Jamieson 9). Furthermore, taking the inaugural addresses as a whole, trends in the usage of these terms are evidenced.

Founding Documents

Declaration of Independence

While the inaugural addresses are the setting where this debate is carried out more fully, it is important to understand the foundation upon which the debate first began. Arguably the first public document attributable to the entire country as opposed to an individual state is the Declaration of Independence written in 1776. The document, which was a justification for the secession of the colonies from Britain, lacks mention of either term. Although by this time the colonies had already organized the First (1774) and Second (1775) Continental Congresses, there was no actual official American government established. It is not

surprising then that the Declaration does not mention any type of government. Rather, it simply makes references to the common demands of the collective, but still individually autonomous states (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Articles of Confederation

Technically speaking, the current Constitution of the United States is not the first constitution, as in a written set of rules of governance, of our country. For over six years (1781-1787), the U.S. was governed by the Articles of Confederation, making it the first constitution of the country. However, rather than establishing a national government apparatus, the Articles of Confederation were truly more of an agreement made between the newly independent states. It was, as the document states, intended to solidify a "firm league of friendship" (Articles of Confederation, 1781). Similar to the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation do not explicitly address the formation of a national government. Instead, the document speaks of the "perpetual Union" that this agreement has created.

United States Constitution of 1787

The U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1787 to replace what many saw as the failing Articles of Confederation. Much more than its predecessor, the Constitution established a comprehensive structure for the national government. Although it does not affix an adjective to the form of the national government, in Section 4 of Article IV The States, the Constitution does command that "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government" (U.S. Constitution, 1787). Interestingly, in regards to the democracy-republic dichotomy, it would appear that the states have heeded this command as the term "democracy" is not in the constitution of any of the fifty states (Wirths 40).

The Federalist Papers and Early Thoughts on the Form of Our Government

While in modern times a discussion of the differences between a democracy and a republic might be largely a theoretical debate that could get bogged down in semantics, scholars argue that for the founders, the "distinction was crystal clear" and that the framer were very "precise in their language" (Wirths 41). For them, developing a republic was creating a "government of laws and not of men" (41). Indeed this clear distinction is evidenced in the Federalist Paper Number 10 in which Madison elaborates in great detail the differences between a "pure

democracy" and a "republic" (Federalist Paper No. 10, 2). Madison argues that while "relief is supplied by the republican principle," "democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention" (2). Indeed, within a week Madison published the Federalist Paper Number 14 in which he ardently defends republics against the errors of "confounding of a republic with a democracy" (Federalist Paper No. 14, 1).

Despite the clear understanding of the differences in these terms, Wirths suggests that the word "democratic" began to slowly "creep into the language" of some of the early American statesmen (Wirths 43). Wirths puts forth Samuel Adams's reference to the "principles of Democratic Republicanism" in a letter to Thomas Jefferson in 1801 (Samuel Adams 411). However, this reference was most likely in regards to the Democratic-Republican Party which Jefferson and Madison formed in 1792. This party was more generally referred to as simply the "Republican party" by its founders and other contemporaries (The James Madison Papers). Scholars suggest that the addition of the Democratic label in Democratic-Republican was more prominently to avoid confusion with the Republican Party established by Lincoln in 1854 (Sperber 117-122).

<u>Democracy Goes Public (as in a speech)</u>

However, even despite the usage of the term in limited private correspondence, Parsons argues that it was until John Quincy Adams's inaugural address that the word democracy was ever used in a public address (108). He suggests that by this time a younger generation of Americans had emerged, allowing an "alteration in the American political vocabulary" to begin to take form (74). JQA's use of the term is in a very limited and narrowly tailored sense, describing the American style of government as a "confederated representative democracy" (Quincy Adams, 1825). By confederated, JQA is referring to the fact that the United States is comprised of an association of states joined together by agreement per the Constitution. Furthermore, JQA uses the term representative to acknowledge that "the people themselves to do not govern but leave governance to the agents they elect," and democracy to indicate that in the broad sense "the people have the power to choose those who govern" (Rosenthal 1). The next President to utilize the term "democracy" clarifies for the audience his use of the term in reference to the American government, suggesting it is a "simple

representative democracy or republic" (Harrison, 1841). Harrison's clarification shows that for him, the terminology "representative democracy" and "republic" can be used interchangeable to describe the same thing.

Yet, it is important to remember the significance of verbal precision. As evidenced by the words of Madison in numbers 10 and 14 of the "Federalist Papers," the early statesmen of America were quick to elaborate on the differences between a "democracy" and a "republic." As such, one must take into consideration Edelman's assertion that, "political language *is* political reality" (Edelamn 104 author's italics). JQA's use of the term, which came on the eve of "America's Jubilee," the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, came at a point in time when, as he keenly noted in his address, "one of these generations has passed away" (Quincy Adams, 1825). Accordingly, JQA's comfortableness with using the term "democracy" is indicative of a new era in American political thought. Furthermore, JQA's use of the term in his inaugural address, lends credence to the fact that the term "democracy" was now a part of the "official vocabulary" (McDiarmid 79).

One example of how quickly the use of a term by the President can quickly permeate into the ordinary vocabulary is the publishing of the book *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville. Tocqueville was a French statesman sent with an associate to America to study its prison system. After his brief nine month tour starting in May of 1831, he published one of the most enduring social and political analyses on America. Tocqueville's book, as the title indicates, talks extensively about the pervasiveness and effects of "democracy in America" (Tocqueville, 1835, 1840). The book extensively cites the American system as a type of democracy. A revealing fact considering that the term democracy had only just begun to emerge into the public language of America.

Besides Harrison's suggestion that a "representative democracy" is synonymous with a "republic," his other reference to the American form of government being a democracy stems from his reasoning that because "the people—a breath of theirs having made, as a breath can unmake, change, or modify [the Constitution]—it can be assigned to none of the great divisions of government but to that of a democracy" (Harrison, 1841). His other references to the term democracy consist of his assertion that "the majority should govern" is a "leading

democratic principle" and as part of his discussion that people should be weary of those who exhibit "unusual professions of devotion to democracy" (Harrison, 1841). The majority of Harrison's usages of the term democracy are not in reference to America's form of government, but rather his assertions on either what constitute democratic principles or the manner in which power hungry individuals try to convince people of their benign intentions.

After Harrison's use of the term democracy, it falls out of the inaugural addresses for over forty years, reemerging again in Grover Cleveland's first inaugural in 1885. However, Cleveland does not outright utilize the term "democracy," but rather only makes the suggestion that the success of American indicates that our "democratic principle needs no apology, and that in its fearless and faithful application is to be found the surest guaranty of good government" (Cleveland, 1885). When Theodore Roosevelt utilizes the term he does so in similar fashion to the way in which JQA first used it, speaking about the country as a "Democratic republic" (Theodore Roosevelt, 1905). Warren Harding makes one acknowledgement that increased trade has helped form a "galaxy of Republics" which "reflects the glory of new-world democracy" (Harding, 1921). However, this is not a reference to the American form of government. When Harding does utilize the term democracy in reference to the American form of government he does so in the manner in which JQA did, as a "representative democracy" (Harding, 1921). In Herbert Hoover's address, he breaks the "representative democracy" pattern by stating that, "In our form of democracy the expression of the popular will can be effected only through the instrumentality of political parties" (Hoover, 1929). However, his address still keeps in line with prior addresses by making more references to the American system as a "Republic."

<u>The Birth of Essential Democracy</u>

On the macro level alone, FDR's inaugural addresses stand out in many ways. Having been selected to four terms as President, FDR was the only President to deliver more than two inaugural addresses. Furthermore, in his first inaugural address he was the first President to utilize the key term "democracy" more than the term "republic." In fact, in his first inaugural address, FDR makes no mention of the "Republic" or any type of "republican principle." Altogether throughout his four inaugural addresses, FDR also utilized the term "democracy"

more than any other President with a total of twenty-four times. Yet, it is not the mere amount of times that FDR utilized the term that is of significance, but rather it is in the manner in which he employs the term.

In October of 1929, the stock market in the United States, and most parts of the world, crashed sparking the beginning of the Great Depression. In the next presidential election in 1932, FDR won a landslide victory over the Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover. FDR's first inaugural address was completely devoted to the current economic situation and the need for action in such a "dark hour" (FDR, 1933). In the midst of such troubling times, FDR assures the American people in the opening lines of his address with the iconic assertion that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself" (FDR, 1933). FDR confidently responds to the situation, calling for "broad Executive power to wage a war against the emergency;" a war in which he assumes "unhesitatingly the leadership of this great army of our people" (FDR, 1933). Throughout the address, FDR firmly establishes that he is willing and able to lead the country through the crisis.

The phraseology employed by FDR as he outlines some of his plans would startle most people if spoken by a politician of present day. He suggests the need for land "redistribution," "national planning," and for people willingly "sacrifice for the good of a common disciple" (FDR, 1933). All the while, and his three reelections support this, he contends that he is reading the "temper of our people." He acknowledges however, that what is about to commence may be a "departure from that normal balance of public procedure." Yet, despite the commencement of his New Deal policies being a departure from the way things have traditionally been done, FDR asserts that they are allowable within our Constitutional framework. He explains his belief that "Our Constitution is so simple and practical that it is possible to meet extraordinary needs by changes in emphasis and arrangement without loss of essential form" (FDR, 1933). Notice his assertion that the form of government, which has largely been addressed as a republic, will not be lost. After explaining the basic principles of his plans and assuring the people that our governmental form will remain intact, FDR concludes by remarking that "We do not distrust the future of essential democracy" (FDR, 1933). With this phrase, FDR demonstrates that the new focus he intends to bring about is the

"essential democracy," but that, as he previously mentioned, the form of the American government will remain intact.

Democracy: The Idea and Ideology

In FDR's second inaugural address he rightfully admits that over the past four years during his administration, "we were writing a new chapter in our book of self-government" (FDR, 1937). He contends that through his New Deal reforms, "we have made the exercise of all power more democratic." This assertion, coupled with his statement that during his time as chief executive, "We of the Republic sensed the truth that democratic government has the innate capacity to protect its people against disasters once considered inevitable, to solve problems once considered unsolvable," elucidates the meaning behind the terms "democracy" and "republic." In the above statement, and in all of FDR's inaugural addresses, he refers to the country as the "Republic" in the sense of a proper noun. However, his statement subtly suggests that the people of the Republic were able to sense something, that something being "democratic," that was not directly of the Republic's form to have to capacity to produce certain effects. Accordingly, while references to the "Republic" address the actual form of government that America has, "democracy" is held up as an idea, or more completely, as a pervasive ideology.

FDR's second inaugural address utilizes rhetoric that incorporates mythic elements and grandiose language. He explains that his administration has brought about a "new order of things" in which "old truths have been relearned; untruths have been unlearned" (FDR, 1937). These references highlight the establishment of a new ideological framework that is built off of some "old truths" but recognizes certain limitations and the need to produce a "new order of things." Both in word and in practice, FDR marked the emergence of modern liberalism, which stemmed from the ideas of classic liberal thinkers.

Classical vs. Modern Liberalism

Classical liberalism was heavily influenced by the Enlightenment and its commitment to the empowerment of the individual and discovery and application of universal reason. The Enlightenment was largely an extension of, and also a part of the other movements like the scientific revolution, which focused on empirical evidence and the rigor of the scientific

method to discover universal truths. Furthermore, the establishment of liberalism is also credited as a product of the breakdown of the feudal system. The removal of the societal constraints imposed by feudalism made it possible for the first time that a person was simply an individual, independent of his or her social classification. Therefore, the context in which classical liberalism developed was one of breaking down social barriers with a concomitant assertion of the discovery of universal truths. Enlightenment thinking held that individuals were all created equal, that each individual was endowed with reason and was therefore able to think rationally about what would maximize his or her happiness. Accordingly, fostering this environment required a commitment to upholding negative freedoms. If each individual has the capacity to discover truth or maximize one's happiness, then the most logical solution would be to free individuals of constraints, maximizing their freedom.

Modern liberalism has by no means turned its back on the ideas of universality and the scientific method, but rather, it has developed out of a growing understanding of their limitations. While both modern and classical liberalism focus their energies on the individual, modern liberalism understands the individual in relation to his position in a social order. In particular, modern liberalism asserts its commitments to justice and equality. While both of these concepts can focus on the individual, they are dependent upon other actors. Justice is essentially a social virtue, guiding the actions between actors. Similarly, equality can only be determined in its relation to another object. Modern liberalism acknowledges the inherit uncertainty and unpredictability of certain aspects of the world. It understands that the world operates in a way that can be studied, but perhaps never as fully understood as the laws of physics.

Modern liberalism's role in assuring positive freedom can be viewed as a growing understanding of what "equality" meant. Enlightenment thinking regarding the equality of man, which is exemplified in the works of Immanuel Kant, asserts that indeed all men are equal in regards to their intrinsic value as human beings. This notion is expressed in the Declaration of Independence's phrase "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Yet, modern liberalism acknowledges that people do not come into

this world as entirely blank slates. While the negative freedoms established by classical liberalism may theoretically allow individuals to do as they please, there are, for better or for worse, certain constraints and limitations present in reality. Some may have natural abilities and talents that allow them to set themselves apart. Others are born into a certain social position that may benefit them. While these factors are not the end all determinants that shape life, they are nonetheless factors that exist. Accordingly, it is in this sense that modern liberalism understands the distinction between intrinsic equality, and a commitment to assuring the positive freedoms of equality and justice in a societal context.

The synthesis of classic liberal thinking with FDR's new modern liberalism is evidenced strongly in his second inaugural address. He argues that now "science and democracy together offer an ever-richer life and ever-larger satisfaction to the individual" (FDR, 1937). By science, FDR references the universal truths and improvements of classical liberalism and by democracy he is explaining the new ideology's commitment to providing the basis of social equality. This new ideology comes with an alteration in the manner in which government operates. In contrast to the limited "night watchman" state of John Locke's classical liberalism, the advent of modern liberalism and FDR's "essential democracy" required the creation of more complex administrative welfare state (Locke, 1689). FDR argues that "as intricacies of human relationships increase, so power to govern them also must increase" (FDR, 1937). However, this newfound power is necessary for democracy to meet the "challenge," which FDR sees as the reality that many in America were then being "denied the greater part of what the very lowest standards of today call the necessities of life" (FDR, 1937).

<u>The Persistence of the Idea</u>

A macro level analysis of the inaugural addresses highlights that FDR's inaugural addresses shifted the type of language that the Presidents utilized. Before FDR, Presidents utilized the term "democracy" only 16 times over 36 speeches, an average of 0.4 times per speech. On the other hand, before FDR Presidents utilized the term "republic" 89 times over 36 speeches, an average of 2.472 times per speech. After FDR, Presidents utilized the term "democracy" 25 times over 16 speeches, an average of 1.56 times per speech constituting an increase in

usage of over 300%. Conversely, after FDR Presidents utilized the term "republic" only 3 times over 16 speeches, an average of 0.1875 times per speech which is more than 13 times less than the term's average usage before FDR.

The numbers however, do not demonstrate the full impact that FDR had on the inaugural addresses. Rather, it is how dramatically the language of the Presidents in their inaugural addresses shifted after his time in office. From Truman through Obama, after FDR all of the Presidents maintained many of the key modern liberal goals. Although, as this analysis will later show, the Presidents integrated these goals in varying ways, the underlying ideological precepts of FDR's modern liberalism remained present in each of the succeeding Presidents inaugural addresses. However, while the majority of the fundamental goals of modern liberalism are evidenced in each of the inaugural addresses after FDR, soon after another debate emerges that is carried out in the presidential rhetoric. This debate, which emerges with the next iconic Democratic president, as the young JFK tries to make his mark in his inaugural address, will be.

THE NEXT DEBATE: THE PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

As previously mentioned in the analysis of wartime rhetoric, Truman utilized the term "democracy" more than any other President. As was highlighted, his speech epitomized the bipolar Cold World mentality, holding democracy as a type of ideology that was pitted against the "false philosophy" of communism. Truman's address outlines what he sees as the many "benefits of democracy," among which are the power to combat the social problems of "hunger, misery, and despair" (Truman, 1949). Likewise, even despite the fact that Eisenhower does not employ the term "democracy," he states that in American society "any man who seeks to deny equality among all his brothers betrays the spirit of the free" (Eisenhower, 1953). Similarly, Kennedy acknowledges that now man has "the power to abolish all forms of human poverty" and that indeed free societies should "help the many who are poor" (Kennedy, 1961). Kennedy's address however sparks another debate that is carried out in the inaugural rhetoric of his successors.

While Kennedy's address retains the same humanistic pursuits established by FDR's modern liberalism, his provocative and iconic command that his "fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country" sparks a series of reevaluations regarding the proper role of government in ensuring modern liberal goals (Kennedy, 1961). Immediately following Kennedy, LBJ's address appears to try to tone down the onset of a critical evaluation of government's role in ensuring the goals of modern liberalism. In trying to promote his Great Society policy reforms, LBJ suggests that "If we fail now, we shall have forgotten in abundance what we learned in hardship: that democracy rests on faith," continuing with the assertion that "If we succeed, it will not be because of what we have…but, rather because of what we believe" (LBJ, 1965). Notice that LBJ desires to continue to promote the "democracy" that was "learned in hardship," which can be taken as FDR's building of his "essential democracy" in the face of the Great Depression. However, in an attempt to deflect critical examination of his policy endeavors, LBJ calls for the people to have "faith" and that success is determined by what they "believe," his way of responding to Kennedy's call for a critical evaluation of the role of government.

Despite the efforts of LBJ to ask for the people to simply have "faith," Nixon responds in his first inaugural address in way that asserts a critical eye towards the role of government. However, Nixon still spells out his administration's intentions "In pursuing our goals of full employment, better housing, excellence in education; in rebuilding our cities and improving our rural areas; in protecting our environment and enhancing the quality of life" (Nixon, 1969). While still seeing the need to pursue the social goals of modern liberalism, Nixon argues that we are now "approaching the limits of what government *alone* can do" (Nixon, 1969, own emphasis added). Notice that Nixon still feels the need for the government to help support such humanistic endeavors, but that he feels that government has certain limitations on what it is capable of doing "alone." He echoes this same sentiment in his second address, stating firmly that he offers "no promise of a *purely* governmental solution for *every* problem" (Nixon, 1973, own emphasis added). Notice once again that Nixon still agrees that government must play a role in ensuring the goals of modern liberalism, just that not "every" issue will be resolved "purely" with a governmental response. In practically direct response to the iconic question that Kennedy asked the people in his address, Nixon suggests that "In

our own lives, let each of us ask—not just what will government do for me, but what can I do for myself" (Nixon, 1973). Nixon's question differs from Kennedy's in regards to whom the action is addressed by placing the action not on individuals aiding government in bringing about social goods, but on individual's aiding his or her self in obtaining a good.

Carter attempts to interject his thoughts into the discussion of the role of government. He suggests that "we know that if we despise our own government we have no future" (Carter, 1977). Trying to reel back in the rhetoric critical of government, Carter states that "Our government must at the same time be both competent and compassionate," echoing the same modern liberal sentiments expressed by FDR and the synergy of "science and democracy" (Carter, 1977). Yet, his appeals to the authority on modern liberalism do not suffice to quell the rising tide of government criticism which reaches its apex with the advent of the Reagan administration the following election cycle.

Completely reversing the sentiments expressed by Carter, in Reagan's first inaugural address he firmly asserts his belief that "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem" (Reagan, 1981). Reagan's address calls for a return to a more classical liberal stance, arguing that the success of America over the years has depended on its ability to unleash "the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before" (Reagan, 1981). These calls to once again break down the boundaries that constrain individual potential reflect a much more classical liberal posture. However, despite Reagan's desire to drastically alter the degree of government intervention into many aspects of American life, much of his rhetoric maintains the aims established by FDR in his calls to build the "essential democracy" of modern liberalism. For example, in Reagan's first address he asks, "How can we love our country and not love our countrymen, and loving them, reach out a hand when they fall, heal them when they are sick, and provide opportunities to make them self-sufficient so they will be equal in fact and not just in theory?" (Reagan, 1981) Notions such as this are intertwined throughout Reagan's addresses and are reflective of his attempt to offer "Compassionate Conservatism" as a replacement to the modern liberal ideology of FDR's "essential democracy." Compassionate Conservatism has been characterized as a political philosophy that is guided by the "traditional notion of

compassion," which can be "understood as a form of tough love, grounded in religious (specifically, Christian) faith, in which the government provides social assistance, yet demands from its recipients a disciplined commitment to individual responsibility and self-help." (Holtzman 7). Notice still that Reagan's compassionate conservatism philosophy can only try to replace the means (governmental policy) to certain ends (social effect). This demonstrates that the aims and normative expectations for the American government that FDR established with his "essential democracy" remain constant; attempts are only made to find different ways in bringing about the desired ends, thus highlighting FDR's addresses as a paradigm shift in inaugural rhetoric.

The Last of the Republic

In Reagan's second inaugural address he utilizes the term "democracy" three times, becoming the first Republican after FDR to utilize the term. Two of his usages are in reference to the Capitol building as a "symbol of our democracy" (Reagan, 1985). His successor, George H. W. Bush, employs the exact same symbolism in his address, referring to the Capitol as "democracy's front porch" (George H. W. Bush, 1989). Bush expresses the sentiment that "for the first time in perhaps all history…We don't have to talk late into the night about which form of government is better." Up until this point the actual form of government has been referenced as the proper noun "Republic." While there was some small compounding of term "democracy" to reference an idea and the form of government by FDR, even he too made seven references to the country as our "Republic" in his four inaugural addresses. Bush however, does not follow suit, perhaps assuming that such a debate is a settled fact. Instead, Bush directs a large portion of his address to the significance of the inauguration as being "democracy's big day" and that the celebration shows that "democracy belongs to us all" (George H. W. Bush, 1989). His tone suggests that democracy is some type of feature, characteristic, or even a commodity that can be enjoyed and shared. The manner in which he utilizes the term democracy is in strikingly (although not surprisingly) the same way in which his son George W. Bush utilizes it in his addresses, as a type of idea or characteristic. As the subsequent addresses show, utilizing "democracy" primarily as a type of idea and the lack of reference to the "Republic" by George H.W. Bush left open the door for a reinterpretation of the governmental form.

A Republic, if you can keep it…or watch it change

Having left out even a passing nod to the "Republic," George H.W. Bush allowed for Clinton to cement the form of government as a democracy. Clinton opens his first inaugural address by suggesting that a there is a "spring reborn in the world's oldest democracy" (Clinton, 1993). However, it is not until Clinton's second inaugural address that he fully tries to assert America's form of government as a democracy. In his second address, Clinton asserts that "Our founders…gave us a democracy" (Clinton, 1997). However, given the views explicitly expressed by Madison in the *Federalist Papers*, Clinton's contention would appear to be rather inaccurate. In fact, there is even the fabled tale of a woman asking Benjamin Franklin after the Constitutional Convention what type of government had been created. Franklin's response was, "A republic, if you can keep it" (Yecke, 2005).

Does the increased use of the term "democracy" mean that we have indeed lost the "republic" that Franklin referenced to the woman in 1787? Quite simply, it depends on how we analyze the situation. Observing the question from a textual perspective, relatively very little has been added to the actual Constitution, a mere twenty-seven amendments in over more than two-hundred years. Yet, an enormous amount of adjudication and changes in jurisprudence have occurred since the document was ratified. Similarly, while the three branches of government that are outlined in the Constitution are still functioning, the entire governmental apparatus has become infinitely more complex than in the days of early America.

Undoubtedly the political landscape of America has changed over the past centuries. What this analysis highlights is that often the rhetoric employed by the Presidents transitions with, and as we have seen, even helps construct new political realities. While to the Founders the differences between a democracy and a republic may have been clear as day, and democracy was used as a pejorative label. However, it was not long before newer generations seeking populist reforms began to ease up to the term, allowing JQA to feel comfortable employing the term in a public address—albeit in a very limited and highly descriptive sense. With the suddenness of the crash of the nation's economy, America was exposed to a new idea—"essential democracy" and the advent of modern liberalism, yet its form remained a Republic. Democracy then became an idea, perhaps a part of a larger American ideological construct

that lent itself as a point of comparison: between "democracy and communism" or "democracy and tyranny." All the while domestically, democracy became an inextricable part of the modern administrative welfare state and the modern liberal mindset. After FDR, Presidents may have changed how to focus on such goals or debated the proper role of government, but the aims of the newfound idea of democracy would forever have to be addressed. Democracy has become an integral part of American political culture, and Presidential inaugural rhetoric. The republic has not been lost, but rather redefined through the rhetoric of the Presidents. Yet, one is still left without a simple definition of what democracy is. What is left is the notion that democracy has become a powerful and pervasive idea—straddling the realms of rhetoric and reality. It is studied but perhaps never truly understood; described but beyond definition.

MOVING BEYOND RHETORIC: OBAMA'S CALLS FOR THE FUTURE

The rhetoric in Clinton's inaugural addresses was the pinnacle of the transition of America's governmental form to a democracy. Clinton also thrust himself into the discussion of the proper role of American government contending that the "great debate over the role of government" is over (Clinton, 1997). He opined that "government is not the problem, and government is not the solution" (Clinton, 1997). While his rhetoric attempts to end the discussion of the proper role of government, the ambiguity of his statement leaves the essential question unanswered.

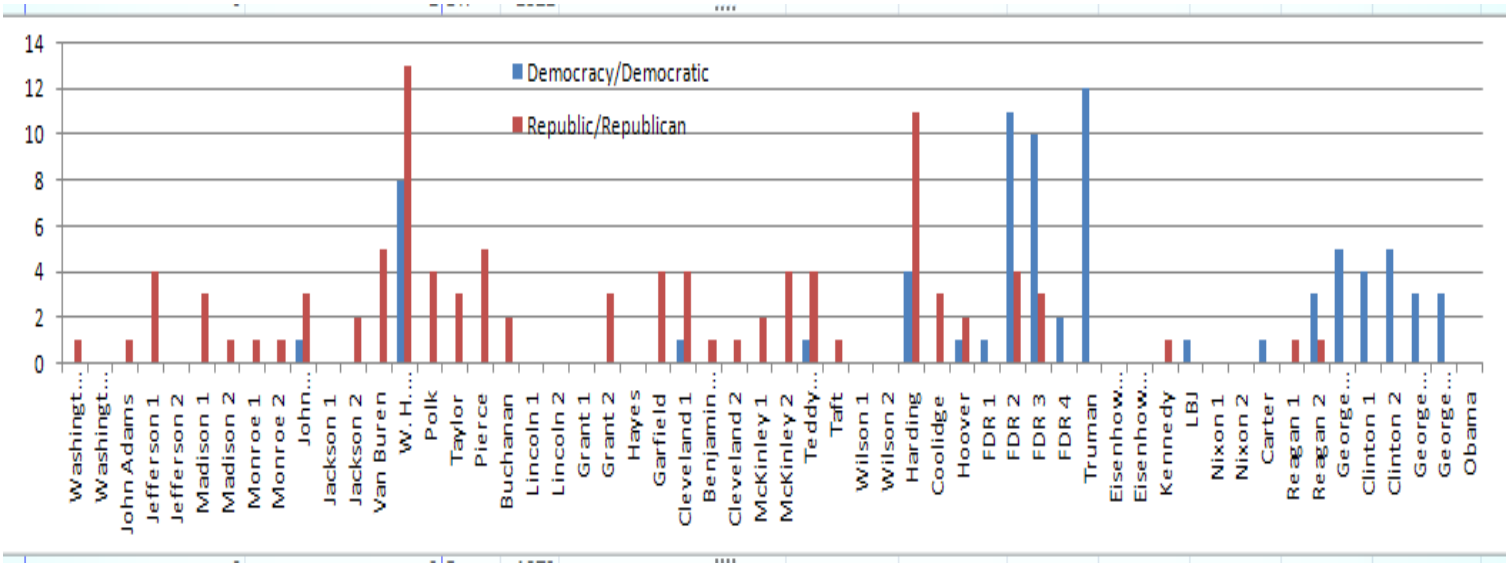
In Obama's inaugural address he also attempts to end the discussion on the proper role of government. However, rather than simply ending the discussion, his address reframes what the new American mindset is. Obama affirms that now is the time to end "petty grievances" and put "aside childish things" that have long divided Americans (Obama, 2009). He explains that the now the "question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works" (Obama, 2009). The focus is drawn away from a rhetorical debate regarding the form of American government or upon semantics and instead calls for a pragmatic evaluation of governmental policy. His address therefore calls for the American people to move beyond rhetoric and focus on practical results.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Key Term Usage

Presidential Inaugural	Democracy/Democratic	Republic/Republican	Party	Year
Washington 1	0	1	N	1789
Washington 2	0	0	N	1793
John Adams	0	1	F	1797
Jefferson 1	0	4	DR	1801
Jefferson 2	0	0	DR	1805
Madison 1	0	3	DR	1809
Madison 2	0	1	DR	1813
Monroe 1	0	1	DR	1817
Monroe 2	0	1	DR	1821
John Quincy Adams	1	3	DR	1825
Jackson 1	0	0	D	1829
Jackson 2	0	2	D	1833
Van Buren	0	5	D	1837
W. H. Harrison	8	13	W	1841
Polk	0	4	D	1845
Taylor	0	3	W	1849
Pierce	0	5	D	1853
Buchanan	0	2	D	1857
Lincoln 1	0	0	R	1861
Lincoln 2	0	0	R	1865
Grant 1	0	0	R	1869
Grant 2	0	3	R	1873
Hayes	0	0	R	1877
Garfield	0	4	R	1881
Cleveland 1	1	4	D	1885
Benjamin Harrison	0	1	R	1889
Cleveland 2	0	1	D	1893
McKinley 1	0	2	R	1897
McKinley 2	0	4	R	1901
Teddy Roosevelt	1	4	R	1905
Taft	0	1	R	1909
Wilson 1	0	0	D	1913
Wilson 2	0	0	D	1917

Harding	4	11	R	1921
Coolidge	0	3	R	1925
Hoover	1	2	R	1929
FDR 1	1	0	D	1933
FDR 2	11	4	D	1937
FDR 3	10	3	D	1941
FDR 4	2	0	D	1945
Truman	12	0	D	1949
Eisenhower 1	0	0	R	1953
Eisenhower 2	0	0	R	1957
Kennedy	0	1	D	1961
LBJ	1	0	D	1965
Nixon 1	0	0	R	1969
Nixon 2	0	0	R	1973
Carter	1	0	D	1977
Reagan 1	0	1	R	1981
Reagan 2	3	1	R	1985
George H.W. Bush	5	0	R	1989
Clinton 1	4	0	D	1993
Clinton 2	5	0	D	1997
George W. Bush 1	3	0	R	2001
George W. Bush 2	3	0	R	2005
Obama	0	0	D	2009
Total	**77**	**99**		



Era	Democratic/Democracy	Republic/Republican	Dem/Speech	Rep/Speech
Pre-FDR	16	89	0.4	2.472
Post-FDR	25	3	1.5625	0.1875

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